

This is the story of a road, and a battle. It is the story of Newton Road.

Newton Road is in an English town. Sally Robson lives there, near her school. She is a teacher. She lives in a small house, but she is happy. She likes her house, and she likes Newton Road. She likes her neighbours, and her neighbours like her. Newton Road is a happy road.

One day Sally is walking to her school. The school is in Newton Road too. She sees her neighbours, Helen Taylor and Paul Johnson. They are talking.

‘Hello,’ Sally says. ‘What’s happening?’

‘Hello, Sally,’ they say. ‘Look! Look at this!’

Sally looks and sees this:



Sally Robson thinks: ‘I don’t like this. Why is there a meeting in the Town Hall? Why is it important? People are happy here. We have no problems.’

‘What’s this about?’ Helen Taylor says.

‘I don’t know,’ Sally says. ‘But I don’t like it.’

She says goodbye to her neighbours and walks to school. She is thinking about Saturday, and the meeting.

Saturday comes, and the people of Newton Road go to the Town Hall. A man comes into the room.

‘Good morning,’ he says. ‘My name is Wood. I’m a civil engineer.’

‘A civil what?’ Helen Taylor asks Sally.

‘A civil engineer,’ Sally says. ‘Civil engineers build roads and houses.’

Mr Wood hears her. ‘That’s right,’ he says. ‘And I’m going to build houses for you. I’m going to build a new road too. But first I’m going to knock down the old houses in Newton Road. The new road is going to be there.’



‘You’re going to knock down our houses?’ the people say.

‘Yes,’ Mr Wood says. ‘But you live in old houses now. You’re going to live in beautiful new houses.’

‘Where are these beautiful new houses?’ Sally asks. ‘Are they near here?’

‘No – no, they aren’t,’ Mr Wood says. ‘But that’s not important.’

‘Yes, it is,’ Sally says. ‘We want to stay near our friends and our jobs. That’s very important.’

Mr Wood is not happy. ‘I’m sorry,’ he says, ‘but think about the new houses.’

But the people of Newton Road think about their friends and neighbours. ‘What are we going to do?’ they ask.



‘We’re going to stay in Newton Road,’ Sally says. ‘Mr Wood can’t build a new road. Newton Road is our road. This is a battle – the battle of Newton Road.’

It is Monday. Sally Robson is at school. She tells her students about the meeting. She tells them about Mr Wood and the new road.

‘He can’t build a new road here,’ they say. ‘He can’t knock down the houses and our school.’

But Mr Wood is a clever man. He shows the new houses to Helen Taylor. He shows them to Paul Johnson.

‘Mr Wood isn’t a bad man,’ Helen Taylor tells Sally. ‘And the new houses aren’t bad.’

‘They’re very good,’ Paul Johnson says. ‘And they have big gardens.’ ‘Think about that.’

Sally tells them: ‘New houses and big gardens aren’t important. Friends are important. And a school for your children.’





Stephen and Catherine are two of Sally Robson's students. They go to her house.

'The people want the new houses,' Sally Robson tells them. 'We can't win this battle.'

'Yes, we can, Miss Robson,' Stephen says. 'Our friends can help.'

Their friends come to Sally's house. Her neighbours see them. They say: 'Sally Robson is right. Friends are important. Newton Road is important.'

April comes. Sally Robson and her neighbours don't go to the new houses. They stay in Newton Road.

April goes and May comes. May goes and June comes. The people of Newton Road stay there.

'I can wait,' Mr Wood says.